

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A method for making a stone article, comprising, the steps of:
  - a) providing a block of material having substantially square top and bottom surfaces;
  - b) impacting said top and bottom surfaces with a non-square blade so as to split off excess material from said top and bottom surfaces and provide said surfaces with a shape substantially matching said non-square blade;
  - c) cutting a cylindrical cut into said top surface;
  - d) drilling a hole into said bottom surface; and
  - e) applying a force into said hole whereby a stone portion within said cylindrical cut is removed from said block of material.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said stone portion removed in said applying step has top and bottom surfaces, and further comprising repeating steps c, d, and e to remove a further stone portion from within said stone portion.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein said applying step is carried out using a force applying member, and further comprising positioning a shock-absorbing member between said force applying member and said block of material.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein said cylindrical cut is made from said top surface to within between about 0.5 and about 1.5 inches of said bottom surface.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein said hole is drilled to a depth of between about 0.5 and about 1.5 inches.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein said hole has a diameter of between about 0.5 and about 1 inch.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein said cylindrical cut is made in a same direction as grains of said block of material.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein said block of material is granite.
9. A method for making a stone article, comprising the steps of:
  - a) providing a block of material having top and bottom surfaces
  - b) cutting a cylindrical cut into said top surfaces;
  - c) drilling a hole into said bottom surface; and
  - d) applying a force into said hole whereby a stone portion within said cylindrical cut is removed from said block of material.

10. An apparatus for polishing outer surfaces of substantially cylindrical stone workpieces comprising:

a workpiece holding and moving assembly adapted to hold a workpiece, move said workpiece along an axis thereof, and rotate said workpiece around said axis; and

a polishing head assembly comprising a plurality of different polishing media and being adapted to selectively position one of said polishing media against said workpiece.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said plurality of different polishing media is mounted to a rotatable head, said head being rotatable relative to said workpiece holding and moving assembly so as to position said one of said polishing media in an active position relative to said workpiece holding and moving assembly.

12. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said head is also mounted for relative movement toward and away from said workpiece holding and moving assembly whereby said head can be positioned between a spaced position wherein said head can be rotated without contacting said polishing media with a workpiece in said workpiece holding and moving assembly, and a working position wherein said one of said polishing media contacts said workpiece in said workpiece holding and moving assembly